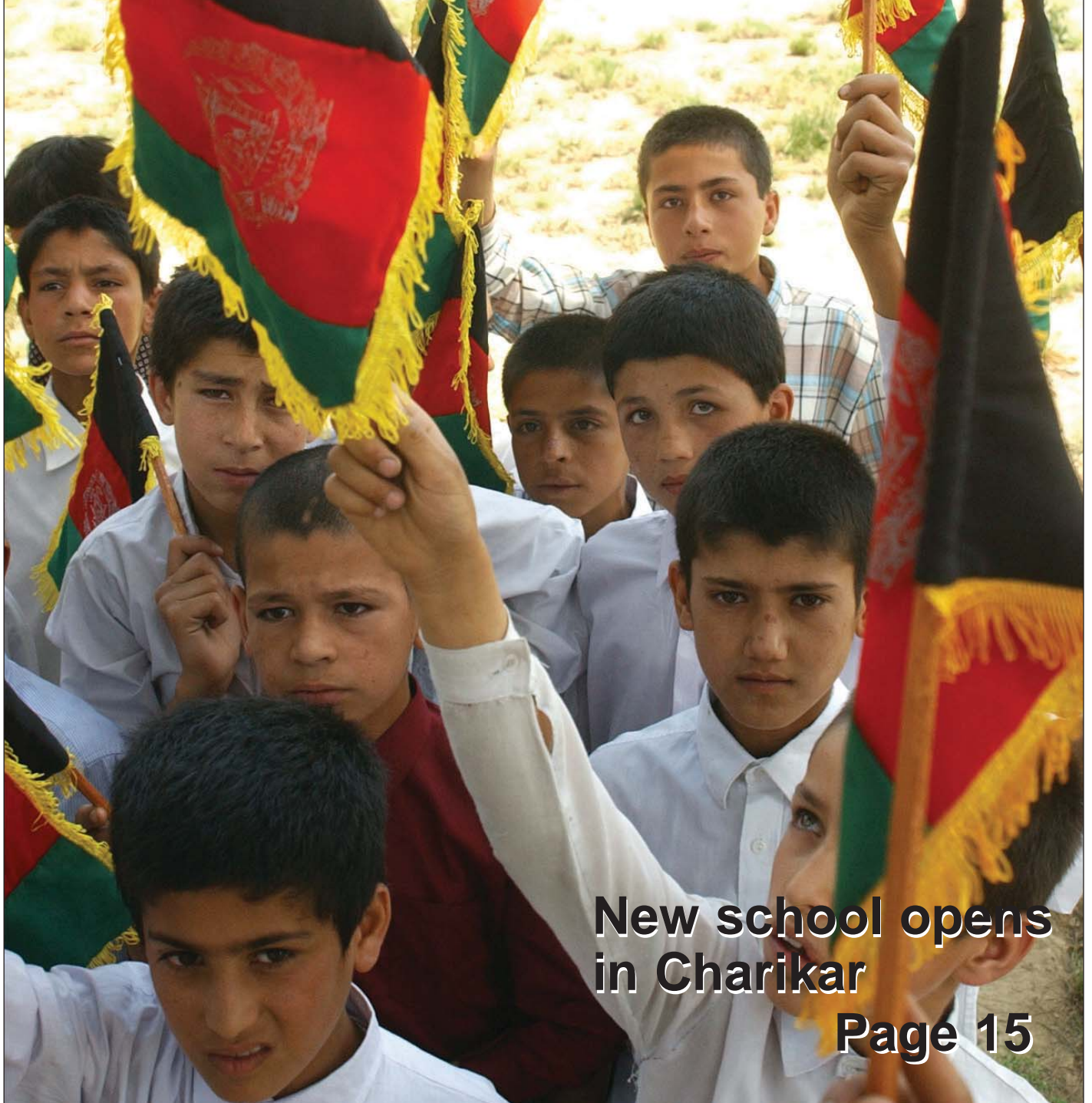


June 5, 2006

# Afghanistan Freedom Watch

Combining the best of the West and Afghanistan



New school opens  
in Charikar

Page 15



The color guard stands at attention just prior to the start of a Memorial Day ceremony at Bagram Airfield on May 28. Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines here took time during a ceremony this Memorial Day weekend to remember their fellow Americans who made the ultimate sacrifice to ensure the freedom of our nation.

Photo by Army Staff Sgt. Robert R. Ramon  
345th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Cover: Afghan children proudly hold up Afghan flags before the opening ceremony of Noman High School in Charikar on May 26.

Photo by Army Pfc. Michael J. Nyeste  
19th Public Affairs Detachment

## Contents

Page 3: Enemy fighters lay down arms

Page 4: Coalition works to defeat IEDs

Page 5: New PRT stands up in Sharana

Page 6: Mannheim Soldiers take to mountains

Page 8: ANA delivers supplies ►

Page 10: ANA, Coalition assists villages near Mazar-e-Sharif

Page 12: Border police, villagers secure border

Page 14: Engineers build easy street

Page 15: New school opens in Charikar ►



## *Afghanistan* **Freedom** Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan **Watch**

*Freedom Watch* is a weekly publication of  
Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan.

CFC-A Commander Lt. Gen. Karl W. Eikenberry  
Public Affairs Officer Col. Thomas Collins

*Freedom Watch*, an Army publication, is published each Monday by the 19th Public Affairs Detachment at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Printed circulation is 5,000 copies per week.

In accordance with AR-360-1, this Army newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas.

Contents of the *Freedom Watch* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army.

Deadline for submissions is 0730 Zulu each Friday. All submissions are subject to editing by the 19th Public Affairs Detachment, located in Bldg. 415, Room 205, Bagram Airfield. We can be reached at DSN 318-231-3338.

### ***Freedom Watch Staff***

Commander - Capt. Jim Bono  
NCOIC/Editor - Sgt. 1st Class Ken  
McCooley

Journalists -  
Cpl. Tremeshia Ellis  
Spc. James Tamez  
Pfc. Anna Perry  
Pfc. Michael Nyeste

**Visit the CFC-A Web site at  
[www.cfc-a.centcom.mil](http://www.cfc-a.centcom.mil)**

Click on the *Freedom Watch* link in the features section to view the *Freedom Watch*. To be added to the weekly distribution list, e-mail [freedomwatch@baf.afgn.army.mil](mailto:freedomwatch@baf.afgn.army.mil)

# Enemy fighters lay down arms in Kunar

**By Marine Capt. Dan Huvane**  
*Task Force Spartan public affairs*

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan** -- Enemy fighters in Kunar Province are responding to the most recent effort by the Afghan government to encourage reconciliation with the democratically-elected government and cease attacks on Afghan and Coalition forces, according to officials at the provincial coordination center in Asadabad.

Since the start of Operation Mountain Lion, 22 former anti-government fighters have taken advantage of the government's "Takhim-e-Solh" program, also known as the "Peace Through Strength" program. The program reintroduces low-threat leaders into Afghan society. At least 30 former fighters have been in contact with Haji Rouzi, the PTS office director in Asadabad.

Rouzi, former governor of Kunar, said recently that a large number of former militants have tried to contact him in order to participate in the program. He said Kunar has the highest number of



Photo by Marine Capt. Dave Huvane

**Afghan National Army Col. Esok (left), commander of 1st Commando Kandak, 3rd Brigade, 203rd Corps, and Marine Lt. Col. James W. Bierman (3rd from left), commander of 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, speak with reconciling combatants in the Korengal Valley following a shura with village elders April 23.**

people who have reconciled among the 1,100 who have done so across seven provinces in the program.

Coalition forces welcome the trend, and are hopeful the operation will result in an increased number of fighters entering the program, said Army Lt. Col. Michael Forsyth, of Task Force Spartan.

"The PTS program is a critical piece for the Government of Afghanistan," he said. "The bottom line is, the more fighters we convince to pledge their allegiance and loyalty to the government of Afghanistan, the less time we will spend using Coalition forces to defeat these insurgents."

**See PROGRAM Page 7**

## Dari/Pashtu phrase of the week



Courtesy Photo

### Afghan cultural tidbit

**Do you have...?**

**Dari**

**Shoorba dared...?**  
(Sho-ma da-red...?)

**Pashtu**

**Tasi lari...?**  
(Ta-so la-ray...?)

***It was in Afghanistan that the ancient religion of Zoroastrianism began in the 6th century B.C. Later, Buddhism spread west from India to the Bamyān Valley, where it remained strong until the 10th century A.D. The eastward sweep of Islam reached Afghanistan in the 7th century A.D., and today the vast majority of Afghans are Muslim.***



# Coalition works together to defeat IED threat

**By Army Cpl. Tremeshia Ellis**  
**19th Public Affairs Detachment**

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** - Officials from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the U.S. are responding to the improvised explosive device threat by proposing an old remedy – cooperation.

More than 70 leaders from the three nations and other Coalition members attended the Counter IED Symposium from May 22 to 24 at Bagram Airfield in an effort to neutralize IEDs.

“IEDs are the biggest threat to the Afghan people and the military effort in Afghanistan,” said Afghan National Army Col. Paiman, public affairs deputy for the Afghan Ministry of Defense. “The IEDs destroy the people, their buildings, and their lives.”

The threat and impact IEDs have on the stability of the region prompted leaders to organize the event.

The objective of the symposium was to provide information on trends, tactics, techniques and procedures focusing on IED defeat systems in the Afghanistan-Pakistan area of operations, said event organizer, Marine Lt. Col. Glen Reinhold, deputy, Future Operations, Directorate of Plans and Training, Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan.

“We need to eliminate these types of threats so that government officials can concentrate on strengthening the government,” Reinhold said. “We are not there yet. We can’t strengthen the government without eliminating the terrorist threat and improving security.”

There have been working groups to discuss IED threats conducted in the past, but the symposium was the first one scheduled on a multi-national level.

“We want to provide a common under-

**“We will fight this threat. We will defeat it. It is vital to the stability of Afghanistan.”**

*Afghan National Army Col. Paiman,  
 deputy public affairs officer,  
 Ministry of Defense*



Photo by Army Cpl. Tremeshia Ellis

**Pakistan Brigadier Azeem Amir, director of military intelligence; Army Col. Christopher Toomey, Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan; and Afghan National Army Brig. Gen. Mohammed Salem, chief of disaster response, listen to briefs May 23 during a Counter IED Symposium on Bagram Airfield.**

standing for a common problem,” said Reinhold.

During the three-day symposium, officials from the U.S., NATO, Afghanistan and Pakistan discussed the threat of IEDs and proposed ways to defeat them. The leaders’ discussions centered on identifying areas with high-terrorist activity, types and designs of devices, tighter controls on explosive sales, incentive programs for whistle-blowers, and detection and disposal training and equipment.

“I think the symposium has been beneficial and informative for us, for the Coalition forces and for the Afghans,” said Pakistan Brig. Azeem Bajwa Amir. “I still think there are areas where we can talk more, share more and benefit more from each other. We are making progress. We are moving in the right direction.”

The key to the successful neutralization of the IED threat is teamwork, Amir said.

“We must increase each other’s capabilities to tackle this threat,” he said. “All three nations must make a unified effort to defeat IEDs.”

Now it’s a matter of putting the knowledge to practical use, said Amir.

“We have deliberated on the methodology of sharing information,” Amir said.

“We have been sharing whatever we know and we will continue doing that. We just have to work out the procedures – how to share, at what levels, etc.”

Paiman agreed with Amir’s assessment.

“Though the Counter IED Symposium was successful, we should also have some practical exercises,” he said.

There are three steps essential to defeating IEDs, Paiman said. They are educating the people on the threat, developing a training course for soldiers and police, and acquiring the proper tools to detect and neutralize IEDs.

“If we can achieve these three parts of the mission, we will be successful and destroy the threat of IEDs,” he said.

In the near future, Paiman said he hopes cooperation from neighbors and Coalition forces will lead to the development of a fully-trained, operational EOD unit within the Afghan National Army that is capable of detecting and eradicating the threat of IEDs.

Though it will take time, Paiman said the Afghan government is confident they will neutralize the IED threat.

“We will fight this threat. We will defeat it,” he said. “It is vital to the stability of Afghanistan.”

# Afghan, American leaders hail new PRT

By Army Sgt. 1st Class  
**Michael Pintagro**  
*Task Force Spartan  
public affairs*

**FORWARD OPERATING BASE SHARANA, Afghanistan** -- The governor of Paktika Province and the commander of Task Force Spartan participated in a transfer-of-authority ceremony here May 15 for the provincial reconstruction team.

Governor Khpalwak and Army Col. John Nicholson bid farewell to Army Lt. Col. Janet Loeffstedt and welcomed Navy Cmdr. Michael Varney as the new Paktika PRT commander.

The commander and command sergeant major of Task Force Catamount, whose area of responsibility encompasses Paktika Province, also attended the event.

"Today the Afghan people have hope, and that's because of the help of the United States of America," said Khpalwak, who recently succeeded Governor Mangal in the



Photo by Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Pintagro

**Army Col. John Nicholson, Task Force Spartan commander, addresses an audience of during a transfer-of-authority ceremony May 15.**

southeastern province. American Soldiers, he noted, "have given great help to the government of Afghanistan and the people of Afghanistan."

The governor vowed to "work hand-in-hand with the Coalition to improve the lives of the people," adding that "if you do anything for the people of

Afghanistan, they will not forget it — the people of Paktika Province will not forget you."

The Task Force Spartan commander said successful combat operations alone will not win the war on terror.

Nicholson praised Afghan, as well as Coalition, efforts in a region as key to the success of

Operation Enduring Freedom.

"Thank you for allowing us to come here and serve beside you against our common enemy," he told the governor and the Afghans in the audience.

The colonel also praised PRT Guardsmen and Reservists for

**See HELP Page 10**

## Enduring Voices

*What will you do or did you do on your mid-tour leave?*



**Army Spc.  
Kelly Sharp**  
Bagram Airfield

*"Go home to Kansas and see my son."*



**Army Pvt.  
Michelle Midgett**  
Bagram Airfield

*"I'm going to go party in Texas."*



**Navy Petty Officer  
2nd Class  
Manuel Ortiz**  
Bagram Airfield

*"I'll probably go to California and maybe Vegas."*



**Army Chief Warrant  
Officer Frank Gary**  
Bagram Airfield

*"I went skiing in Washington."*



# Mannheim Soldiers take to mountains in Afghanistan

**By Air Force Tech. Sgt. Matt Summers**

**Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan public affairs**

**TOWR KHAM FIRE BASE, Afghanistan** -- The "Fighting Deuce" rolled into eastern Afghanistan a little more than two months ago to try its hand at intercepting insurgents in some of the most rugged terrain the country offers.

More than 30 Mannheim, Germany-based soldiers from the 272nd Military Police Company "Fighting Deuce" are joined by a platoon from the 1st Battalion/188th Air Defense Artillery of the North Dakota National Guard at Towr Kham Fire Base, a remote outpost just minutes from the Afghanistan-Pakistan border crossing at Towr Kham.

From this castle-like structure the Soldiers go outside the wire daily to interdict, intercept and deter enemies of Afghanistan, denying them the means to operate or carry out attacks against coalition forces and the local population. The Soldiers, operating as part of Task Force Vigilant, conduct several operations in conjunction with members of the 1st Brigade of the Afghan National Border Police to take advantage of police's familiarity with terrain and enemy methods of operations.

"The ABP know every crook and cranny in this area," said Army Spc. Matt Farino, 272nd MPC and native of Long Island, N.Y. "The insurgents might also have an advantage because they know the area, but we balance it out by getting elevated and using technology to see what's going on."



Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class William Townsend

**Army Spc. Rachel Carey, member of the 272nd MPCr, attaches the barrel to her .50 caliber machine gun before departing on a mission at Torkham, Afghanistan/Pakistan border.**

The challenge is daunting, according to 1st Lt. Renee Ramsey, 272nd MPC platoon commander. The more than 170 miles of border under the ABP 1st Brigade's watch has few vehicle crossing points, yet hundreds of foot and animal trails used for hundreds of years by locals and caravans.

She said the Soldiers' missions often involve grueling mountain ascents to spend several nights at listening and observation posts near the border.

"We have a motto in the military police community of 'death before dismount,'" said Farino. "We really don't want to leave our vehicles -- they are our lifeline, it's where we have the heavy weapons support -- but in this environment we have to."

The mission is also physically demanding, he added.

The Soldiers put boots on the

ground to patrol, gain intelligence and intercept weapons and personnel. Foot and animal trails are used daily by Afghan refugees returning from Pakistan, traders who want to avoid the major crossing at Towr Kham and shepherds who graze their flocks back and forth across the border.

Soldiers keep a close watch for insurgents who try to blend in with trade caravans, according to Army Staff Sgt. Chris Chavez, 272nd MPC squad leader.

Despite long duty days and the austere environment of the fire base, many Soldiers said the deployment is a welcome change from garrison duty and training in Germany.

"We do a lot of training back in Germany," said Army Private 1st Class Brad Godsey, a 22-year-old from West Terre Haute, Ind., who volunteered

for this deployment. "Here we are applying the skills we've learned on a daily basis."

A Chicago native, Army Private 1st Class Brian Berkery, whose father was a Vietnam War prisoner of war and grandfather who was a POW in World War II, said there's a greater sense of urgency.

"Ever time you roll out of the wire there's a chance something can happen," said the 28-year-old who joined the Army in 2004. "The skills we've trained on have become second nature."

Army Spc. Rachel Carey, a 21-year-old native of Aurora, Ill., who joined the military to better herself as a person, said this deployment is no 9-to-5 job.

"You better know what you're doing over here," said the mother who carries pictures of her daughter Madison on every mission. "It's not only your life

**See DUECE Page 7**

## DUECE from Page 6

on the line, but everyone else in your truck.”

The Soldiers have also found time to teach basic police skills to members of the ABP's 1st Brigade. They teach proper techniques for personal and vehicle searches, apprehension and detainment and use of a baton. They also concentrate on individual and squad move-

ments, building entry procedures and reaction to improvised explosive devices.

“We’re teaching them skills so they can do their own job proficiently,” said Godsey, the father of 3-year-old Bradley Jr. “The more we teach them and the better we teach them the sooner they can stand on their own and we can go home.”

Berkery said teaching the border police has also helped him

grow as a Soldier.

“I’m not really good in front of crowds,” said Berkery. “This is a stepping stone for me to improve my speaking skills.”

The private said border police officials have expressed their appreciation for the training provided, but reminded the Soldiers that patience is key, as many of the policemen have been fighting in some form or

we have to teach them how to operate in a time of peace.”

Mustakas, who has also deployed to Iraq, said the Afghan and Iraq environments couldn’t be more different for his unit.

“Iraq is a much more industrial, urban environment,” said the five-year veteran. “It’s a much more tactical environment here so we have to tailor the training.”

The 272nd MPC Soldiers, working under leadership of the 10th Mountain Division, support Task Force Vigilant, a combined border operations and police tactical training mission in conjunction with the ABP.

Army Sgt. Joseph Mustakas, a 272nd MPC team leader from Silver Springs, Md., echoes the sentiment.

“These men know how to operate in a time of war — they know how to fight,” said the 22-year-old. “Now

we have to teach them how to operate in a time of peace.”

“Our Soldiers truly embody their platoon motto of ‘Stay Hard,’” said Ramsey, a Buffalo native. “They have definitely earned their ‘Mountain’ patch.”

The Army has a tradition whereby Soldiers earn the right to wear the “patch” or insignia of a unit they serve with in combat operations even if they’re not permanently assigned to the unit.



Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class William Townsend

**Army Staff Sgt. Chris Chavez, 272nd MPC squad leader, conducts radio checks before departing on a mission at Torkham, which is on the Afghanistan/Pakistan border.**

## PROGRAM from Page 4

Forsyth said the time saved from reducing kinetic operations allows the Coalition to assist the Afghan people further develop their economy and to fund reconstruction projects.

The PTS program has been aided in Kunar’s Korengal Valley recently by frequent shuras, or council meetings, which typically include representatives of the government, the Afghan National Army and the Coalition. Village elders have brought individuals who desire to enter the PTS program with them to recent shuras.

“The purpose of these shuras is for the representatives of the government of Afghanistan, particularly at the district and province level, to come into the Korengal and meet with the local leadership,” said Marine Lt. Col. James W. Bierman, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment com-

mander. “What we’re trying to do is support the government and extend the reach of the government, especially into places like the Korengal, where there’s been very little contact before.”

During a recent shura hosted by the ANA and the Coalition, village elders told Bierman that locals are closely watching those who have entered the PTS program and taking note of how they are treated. The results have been encouraging, according to Bierman.

“When the key elements in a village, district and province decide for reconciliation with the government, all relatives collectively come to keep in touch with the tribe shura, the representative of the PTS office, and provincial council members,” said Afghan National Police Col. Hassan Farahi, deputy chief of police in Kunar.

“The individuals entering the program are provided with information on the proper procedures to connect with gov-

ernment officials.

“Once identities are confirmed and documents are in order, the general directory of PTS in Kabul is informed that a group is coming to announce their reconciliation with the Government of Afghanistan,” he added.

Army Lt. Col. Pete Munster, Asadabad Provincial Reconstruction Team commander, gauges the success of the program from his frequent contact with provincial officials such as Rouzi. He credits the forgiveness encouraged by Kunar governor Asadullah Wafa as a primary reason for success.

“The way in which Governor Wafa addresses the anti-government and non-criminal former combatants and insurgents, and his advice to other Afghans to convince their brothers to repatriate,” said Munster, “could be one of the significant reasons influencing these anti-Afghan government militants to make peace.”





Photos by Army Sgt. 1st Class Michael Rautio

**Army Capt. Brian Ullia watches as Afghan National Army soldiers from the Central Movement Agency here, practice a series of convoy battle drills in order to improve their tactics and techniques when delivering supplies to other ANA soldiers battling insurgents around Afghanistan.**

## ANA soldiers deliver

**By Army Sgt. 1st Michael Rautio**  
*10th Joint Logistics Command*  
*public affairs*

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** -- Soldiers of the Afghan National Army Central Movement Agency here have been delivering equipment and supplies to Afghan forces spread across the country.

Nearly 40 of them met with three advisors from the U.S. Army's 330th Movement Control Battalion, part of the Joint Logistics Command and Combined Joint Task Force-76, at Bagram Airfield on May 10 and 11 to rehearse and practice operational procedures. This marks the first time Soldiers from the Movement Control Battalion

have come to the Agency and shared

"We're just trying to improve their capabilities," Capt. Brian Ullia, detachment commander, Mass. "They are applying all around and sharing our tactics, procedures, hopefully improve their survival in the field."

A supply officer said they were eager to learn the tasks shown them.

In the long run, the ANA the tools and succeed as they pro





**(Above)** Army Capt. Brian Ulloa lifts Army 2nd Lt. Luke Wheeler into the back of an Afghan National Army truck at the Central Movement Agency here with a little help from Army Capt. Leonard B. Della-Moretta. The three were here offering their expertise in convoy operations to the soldiers of the CMA.

**(Left)** Army Capt. Brian Ulloa talks with Afghan National Army soldiers from the Central Movement Agency at Bagram Airfield. Ulloa was visiting the CMA to offer practical tips and share his expertise on convoy operations.

## ver vital equipment

the Central Movement Agency offered their expertise.

trying to help the ANA capabilities," said Army Capt. Ulloa, 330th headquarters commander, from Oxford, who is already delivering supplies to Afghanistan, but by sharing tactics, techniques and procedures we can help them improve survivability on the battlefield.

Ulloa said the ANA soldiers need to learn and perform the mission.

It is about giving them the knowledge to provide for a safe and

secure Afghanistan, said Army 2nd Lt. Luke Wheeler, supply officer for the 330th, from Sayre, Pa. "These past few days have gone extremely well.

This week of rehearsals and practice was not the end of this relationship.

"I want to help these men however I can," said Army Capt. Leonard B. Della-Moretta, the executive officer of the 497th Movement Control Team based at Camp Darby, Italy, and now deployed to Afghanistan. "These men are the war-fighter logisticians of the Afghan Army. The ingenuity of these soldiers, to take what assets they have and apply them to their mission, allows the war fighters to take the fight to the enemies of Afghanistan's freedom."



**Army 2nd Lt. Luke Wheeler demonstrates proper hand signals to use when ground guiding a vehicle.**

# Meeting the need, one village at a time

By Army Pfc.

**James Tamez**

**19th Public Affairs Detachment**

**CAMP SPANN, Afghanistan**

-- Afghan National Army personnel, along with service members stationed at Camp Spann, met some of the needs of Afghan citizens near Mazar-i-Sharif thanks to donations from family and friends of U.S. service members.

Personnel with the 209th Regional Command Advisory Group and ANA personnel from the 209th Shaheen Corps delivered a variety of supplies and assisted in the building of schools.

"Making these supply runs to the schools is very important to accomplishing our mission here," said Army Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Keller, operations non-commissioned officer, 196th Field Artillery Brigade, Tennessee National Guard. "We are providing support to the citizens of Afghanistan, and ANA personnel are assisting us in finding the areas that need help."

Keller said it takes a large number of people to coordinate and carry out supply runs to local villages. From U.S. and ANA security forces providing

security at the drop areas, to medical personnel providing assistance to the sick and injured, he said things can only get done when everyone works together.

"We can't provide for everybody's needs on our own," Keller said. "This is not a one-man operation. The more people who help, the more we can get done."

Every U.S. and Afghan soldier here has done something to help, whether it was handing

out supplies or digging a well, said Army Maj. Jeff Mataruso, contracting officer representative, 209th Regional Command Advisory Group.

"We find out about the need from ANA personnel who were from these villages," he said. "They then help us make contacts in the locations."

Mataruso said the majority of the supplies and gifts distributed at the locations are from people back in the United States. He said those people

stepped up and responded when the service members let them know what the situation for the people of Afghanistan is like.

"These gifts that are being mailed here from back home are coming out of a desire to help Afghanistan grow," Keller said. "That is the attitude that we approach with, especially with the children. These children are the future for Afghanistan. We want their future to be bright."



Photo by Army Spc. James Tamez

**Haikim Haidary, an interpreter for the U.S. Army, hands out school supplies to girls at the Baba Mazari Elementary School on May 6. The supplies were brought to the school and distributed to the children by U.S. Soldiers and Afghanistan National Army personnel.**

## HELP from Page 5

voluntarily undertaking a challenging mission on behalf of their country.

"On behalf of the nation, thank you for volunteering to come here and serve your country," he said. "I honestly think you're making the world better for our country and our children."

The outgoing commander characterized her organization's efforts as a hardship, but not a sacrifice.

"Seldom in life are we given an opportunity to do work that so directly impacts the lives of others," Lofstedt said.

She also hailed the performance of PRT members during their rotation.

"Your performance has been superb in every respect," Lofstedt said.

Varney embraced a "Team Paktika" theme, noting the squad includes Coalition soldiers, ANSF, local and national government officials, and international aid workers as well as PRT members. If the people of the province feel secure, confident and trustful of their government, the incoming commander said, "Team Paktika has been a success."

"Remember we work for the people of Paktika," he told PRT personnel.

Navy Cmdr. James C. Hamblet took command of the Ghazni PRT reins from Army Lt. Col. Robert F. Meier Jr. during a

ceremony at FOB Ghazni May 15.

Nicholson, who also presided over the Ghazni event, awarded the Bronze Star Medal to Meier during the ceremony.

Hamblet outlined lofty objectives for his incoming PRT.

This group of men and women has been brought together for a purpose, he said.

"Our promise to the nation is that we shall be worthy of the men and women who have distinguished themselves in combat before us," Hamblet said. "We give our sweat, our hearts and our tireless devotion to duty. We will be courageous and determined in the face of danger. And to the end, we shall be worthy."



# Service members afforded college opportunities

**By Army Pfc. Michael J. Nyeste**  
19th Public Affairs Detachment

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** - Coalition forces, service members and civilians serving in Afghanistan, are able to earn college credit, degrees and promotion points while in theater.

Service members and civilians have many options in earning college credit while in Afghanistan, said Paul J. Lovello, education services officer for Afghanistan.

People can visit one-of-four education centers located in Afghanistan: Bagram, Camp Phoenix, Kandahar and Salerno. Each center is open 12 hours a day, seven days a week. The centers also provide some educational services to other forward operating bases in Afghanistan, Lovello said.

One way to earn college credits is to take a College Level Examination Program course. A person goes to an education center, signs up for the course, borrows a text book for roughly two weeks, schedules a test date, studies and then takes the test at the center. For active service members, it's free, Lovello said.

Another option is to take college courses at classrooms at one of the education centers.

People can also take online internet courses from either their own personal computers, or a computer the education



Photo by Army Pfc. Michael J. Nyeste

**Army Sgt. John Barchella, a re-enlistment noncommissioned officer for the 3-10 Combat Aviation Brigade, studies his college subjects at the Bagram Airfield Education Center.**

centers provides, Lovello said.

Service members who are debating whether or not to earn college credit while deployed are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity, Lovello said.

"Taking college courses makes your tour more fulfilling," said Lovello. "It passes the time and enhances your career in military and civilian sector at a minimal cost."

Lows costs and a helpful and flexible

staff are a few reasons why Army Sgt. John Barchella, re-enlistment noncommissioned officer for the 3rd Battalion, 10th Combat Aviation Brigade, enjoys taking college courses at Bagram.

"Everyone is very helpful and the teachers and hours are flexible," he said. "You get promotion points, and you can get an education and still be an asset to the mission."



## PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

**Three CH-47 Chinooks and two AH-64 Apaches refuel at the Forward Ammo Refuel Point at Jalabad Airfield. The helicopters occupied all five refueling points at the airfield, making for a busy day for the aviation Soldiers.**

Photo by Army Spc. Kerri Smith  
1st Battalion, 183 Aviation Regiment

If you have high-quality photos of service members supporting the Coalition mission or enjoying well-deserved off-duty time, please e-mail them to [freedomwatch@baf.afgn.army.mil](mailto:freedomwatch@baf.afgn.army.mil). Please include full identification and caption information, including who is in the photo and what action is taking place.

# Afghan border police, villagers secure border

## Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan public affairs

**TOWR KHAM FIRE BASE, Afghanistan** -- He says his unit acts as a door to Afghanistan, responsible for keeping bad people and things out and catching bad people trying to leave the country.

Commander Naqeebullah of the Afghan Border Police's 1st Brigade, 2nd Battalion, directs the efforts of more than 300 men responsible for 160 kilometers of the Afghan-Pakistan border ranging from Tora Bora to Shirzad. He commands from a rocky outcrop overlooking the village of Ghani Kheyl in the Shinwar District of eastern Afghanistan.

"I feel more like a soldier than commander," said the native of Sarshai village who escaped to Pakistan and fought against the Taliban regime from the Panjshir Mountains. "I don't do this for the money -- I'm already a wealthy man -- I do this for my country."

Several of Naqeebullah's men

are among the more than 62,000 national police, highway police and border police officers who have completed basic training programs at facilities throughout Afghanistan.

Because there are no major vehicle border crossings in his area, the commander sends his men out along paths carved through centuries of trade -- most are little more than donkey or caravan trails.

Members of the ABP's 1st Brigade, 1st Battalion near the town of Rench have even received help from local villagers in stopping insurgents and smugglers, according to ABP 1st Lt. Naqib Ullah, commander of the battalion's Kamah Dakan Compound.

"The people of Rench are soldiers and they have formed a militia to help us patrol and protect the border," he said.

ABP Capt. Khan Mohammad, another commander within the 1st Battalion in Jangora, said his men routinely check items for illegal drugs or



Photos by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class William Townsend

**An Afghan Border Patrol Soldier inspects the cargo strapped to a donkey. There are numerous trails crossing the border into Pakistan where camels, horses and donkeys are utilized.**

weapons as well as car parts and motor oil carried through the mountains by donkeys, horses and camels.

"I'm very proud to be a part of the rebuilding effort of my country," said Mohammad. "My men are very brave and honorable."

Naqeebullah's men also conduct "presence patrols" in local villages to increase the populace's familiarity with border patrol forces.

"The people are very happy when we walk through the villages," said ANP First Sergeant Hijrat Ulla. "And we are very happy to be serving our country."

Naqeebullah said it's not hard to motivate his men.

"I tell them they are the sons of Afghanistan and they have to work to make their country a better place," he said. "Then they can look toward the future. We have 60 to 70 percent peace in Afghanistan now, and if we try we can have 100 percent peace."

The commander believes education is a key to rebuilding his country. "If you are uneducated you can't solve problems on your own," he said.

But while many of his policemen have little to no formal education, what they lack in schooling, they make up for in desire, Naqeebullah said.

ANP Pvt. Alladad is a perfect example of the policeman who learns quickly. "I'm not educated but I want to serve my country," Alladad said of why he chose to serve in the ANP. "I like the training very much and I want to learn more -- I have a desire to learn."

Naqeebullah said he thinks it will take several years to completely rebuild the country and he disagrees with anyone who says the process is too slow or too difficult.

"Just look at where Afghanistan was five years ago and where we have come so far," he said. "It will take time and it will take the efforts of all our friends."



**An Afghan border police officer prepares his weapon while securing the perimeter around the village of Rench near the Pakistan border.**



# Mechanic tunes medical skills in Afghanistan

**By Air Force Tech. Sgt. Matt Summers**

**Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan public affairs**

**JALALABAD AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** -- Most days this past winter you could find him under the hood of a car at Hansen Ford in Grand Forks, N.D. But, for the last 45 days he's been fixing fellow Soldiers and the people of war-torn Afghanistan instead.

Army Staff Sgt. Philip Wanzek, a medic assigned to the 1st Battalion/188th Air Defense Artillery of the North Dakota National Guard, is currently deployed here for a one-year tour.

The Valley City High School graduate spends most of his time treating Soldiers' common ailments in this arid climate — dehydration and upset stomachs.

"Any time you go to a different country and a different environment there's an adjustment period," said the father of four.

Preventative medicine is a key to containing ailments and to keeping them from spreading person-to-person in the cramped living conditions of the camp here.

"We really push people to wash their hands after going to the bathroom and before they eat in the chow hall," said Wanzek, whose unit trained for four months at Fort Lewis, Wash., before deploying.

Among the more mundane, but challenging aspects of his job is to keep a stock of critical medication and equipment, said Wanzek of a medical supply chain that stretches back to Europe and the Middle East.

"Getting the right supplies, in the right quantities in a timely manner is key," he said.

Equipment, or lack thereof, is the test of a true medic, said the biology major who graduated from the University of North Dakota-Grand Forks.

"What makes a medic is making do without equipment -- using only what you have available," said Wanzek, permanently assigned to the 814th Medical Detachment in Bismarck, N.D.

Training fellow Soldiers to treat themselves and their battle buddies gives him the greatest satisfaction in his role here. One of only nine personnel in the unit of more than 150 with a medical background, Wanzek is tasked with keeping 115 Soldiers, trained as combat life savers, current in their skills.

When the 11-year medic isn't working inside the confines of the camp, he's treating Afghan citizens throughout Nangarhar Province in eastern Afghanistan along the border with Pakistan.

Wanzek and fellow medics travel to remote villages and treat patients with the limited supplies at their disposal. Common ailments include eye infections and various skin infections left untreated.

"People are so appreciative of what you can give them," he said. "The initial treatment is good, but to see improvement in patients seen more than once makes it that much better."

He said medical facilities are few and far between in this mountainous region of Afghanistan and what medi-



Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class William Townsend

**Army Staff Sgt. Phillip Wanzek with the 814th Medical Detachment out of Bismarck, N.D., attaches an IV to a dehydrated soldier in Jalalabad, Afghanistan. He is one of several medics assigned to Jalalabad Airfield in Afghanistan.**

cine exists is expensive. People often travel several hours to be seen by a medical professional.

"There's a feeling of helplessness -- like our hands are tied," said Wanzek of the limited supplies and capability the medics provide. He said the translator who travels with him often translates medic as "doctor" in the local Pashto language, creating awkward situations where patients sometimes expect more than what Wanzek can offer.

He said the language barrier also has to be overcome during patient diagnosis.

"Body language works well sometimes -- and other times it is difficult," he said.

Anxious to return to the states and apply to medical school at UND, the sergeant said there's a direct connection between auto mechanics and the art of healing.

Wanzek, who became a mechanic to put himself through college, said both professions use the SOAP approach. A professional must

first be Subjective and listen to what the patient or customer tells them is wrong. Next, mechanics or medics must be Objective and describe what they find is wrong. Then comes the Assessment of what they think is wrong -- the cause. Finally, they must Plan -- what will the caregiver do about the problem.

Army Sgt. Brian Thompson, a fellow medic with the 1st/188th, said Wanzek is by far the most knowledgeable of the unit's caregivers.

"It makes it real easy to follow someone when they know what they're doing," he said. "It also makes it easier to talk to him and ask him questions when something comes up."

Army Spc. Danielle Bullis, a military policeman with the 1st/188th and a recent patient of Wanzek said she has faith in her unit's medics.

"I'm very confident in their ability to treat Soldiers," she said. "There isn't a doubt in my mind about the abilities of any of our medics."

# Engineers build easy street for troops

By Army Pfc.

Anna K. Perry

19th Public Affairs Detachment

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** -- Troops walking on Bagram Airfield's Disney Drive may have noticed a few changes recently.

A team of Air Force engineers, with assistance from Afghan workers, has been hard at work improving Bagram's

most heavily traveled pedestrian route.

"We removed barriers, installed the green fences and increased the size of the sidewalk," said Air Force Maj. Randy Boswell, deputy commander, facility engineer team, 755th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron.

Boswell said there are many factors contributing to the

route's improvements.

"When the United States first took over Bagram, there was no perimeter surrounding the entire base," Boswell said.

Each camp was self-divided with barriers, but now with the perimeter they are no longer necessary, he added.

Boswell said the barriers were past their prime and beginning to look bad. Besides making

things look better, the new sidewalk route has freed up space for new developments.

Maj. Gen. Benjamin C. Freakley, Combined Joint Task Force-76 commanding general, told the facility engineer team he wants Bagram to be pedestrian friendly, Boswell said.

Therefore, the sidewalks were increased to 10-foot wide, rather than six feet, Boswell added.

In the near future, the sidewalk will also stretch the length of the road, from the North Post Exchange to Entry Control Point One.

"It's safer for troops now because they aren't in the way of traffic and they have more room to jog," said Air Force Senior Master Sgt. Michael Irons, noncommissioned officer in charge of the base engineer emergency force. Irons is assigned to the 755th ECES.

Projects like this also improve troops' living conditions so they can concentrate solely on the mission, Irons added.

"Our mission is important because without the infrastructure, troops wouldn't be able to pursue the operational missions," Boswell said.



Photos by Army Pfc. Anna K. Perry

**Air Force Senior Airman Joseph Chandler puts the finishing touches on a new sidewalk along Disney Drive on May 26. The sidewalk is part of an effort to improve conditions for pedestrian traffic on Bagram Airfield.**

**Afghan workers lay asphalt along Disney Drive's sidewalk May 25. The project is part of an effort to improve Bagram's infrastructure.**





# New school overshadows ruins of old

**By Army Pfc. Michael J. Nyeste**  
19th Public Affairs Detachment

**BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan** - Members of the Bagram Provincial Reconstruction Team, the Governor of Parwan, the Education Minister of Parwan, teachers, principals and students celebrated the grand opening of the Noman High School in Charikar on May 26.

Thanks to the efforts of the Bagram PRT and the Afghanistan Construction Company, students will no longer be educated in the ruins of a school that was destroyed by the Soviets decades ago, said Air Force Lt. Col. Donald Koehler, Bagram PRT commander.

Before the opening ceremony began on the school's soccer field, Bagram PRT members handed out T-shirts and backpacks to all of the children who attended the ceremony.

The ceremony began with speeches from Koehler, Jabaer Taqwa, the governor of Parwan Province, Samia Saeat, the education minister of Parwan Province, school staff members and students.

Once the speeches concluded, elementary students from a nearby school sang a song of thanks, echoing "PRT thank you. PRT thank you."

"Hearing the kids sing was incredible. It let's you know that these people truly appreciate what we do," Koehler said.

Afterwards, the governor awarded 7th graders new bicycles with "Education is



Photos by Army Pfc. Michael Nyeste

**Jabaer Taqwa, the governor of Parwan cuts the ribbon during the opening ceremony while Air Force Lt. Col Donald Koehler and Samia Saeat, the education minister of Parwan also take part.**

Life" inscribed in English and Dari. They received these bicycles for their academic achievement and will be attending the new high school next year.

"They had shock, amazement and joy written on their faces. Some of those kids thought they'd never have a bike of their own," Koehler said.

Once the governor awarded the bicycles, he along with the education minister and Koehler, each took part in a ribbon cutting ceremony at the doors of the new school.

After the ceremony, they toured the 20-room school that houses a library and a lab for chemistry, biology and physics.

Equipment for the lab was provided by the government of Germany.

The new school and equipment will have a huge, positive impact on the students' lives, Taqwa said.

"You can judge from the faces of the kids how important it was to build this school," Taqwa said.

Helping the local kids and the educational system in Afghanistan as a whole hasn't gone unappreciated, Saeat said.

"I thank the PRTs for all the construction of schools throughout Afghanistan, especially in the Parwan Province," Saeat said.



**(Left) A 7th grader is awarded a new bicycle for academic achievement by Jabaer Taqwa, the governor of Parwan.**



**Samia Saeat, the education minister of Parwan delivers a speech during the opening ceremony of Noman High School in Charikar.**



*Freedom Watch*

*June 5, 2006*



**"Faith is the strength by which a shattered world shall emerge  
into the light,"  
Helen Keller**

Afghans study and pray outside the Green Mosque on May 5. The Mosque is located near Mazar-i-Sharif and is more than 800 years old. Photo by Army Spc. James Tamez, 19th Public Affairs Detachment